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THE HISTORY OF THE EUCHARISTIC VESTMENTS.*

BY THE REV. E. L. CUTTS, B.A.



IN the last two numbers of the *Art Journal* we gave a sketch of the history of the official vestments of the clergy from the earliest period at which it can be ascertained that such official vestments were worn, down to the time of the Reformation. We showed how the mediæval vestments were retained to the end of the reign of Henry VIII., and still continued to be worn in the early part of the reign of Edward VI.; and we gave some evidence which led to the belief that, with certain restrictions as to the colour and ornaments of the alb, the old vestments were in use to the very end of the young king's short reign.

We gave an engraving of the monumental brass of Bishop Gooderich, of Ely, who was chancellor in the latter part of Edward's reign—and, on the accession of Mary, was not deprived of his bishopric for the brief remainder of his life—as a fine and interesting example of the full episcopal vestments of that period.

Another illustration of this Reformation period is to be found in the alabaster effigy of Bishop Harman, or Voysey,† of Exeter, at Sutton Coldfield. He was consecrated before the Reformation, in 1519, and died in 1557, in the reign of Queen Mary. He is habited in alb, dalmatic, and chasuble, which reaches down to the knee in front, and is somewhat longer behind; he wears the mitre, and bears the pastoral staff.

At Tideswell, Derbyshire, of a little later date, is a somewhat similar brass of R. Pursglove, a suffragan bishop, consecrated early in the Reformation period, viz. in 1538 A.D.; he held office

through the subsequent period till the death of Mary, when he was one of the dignitaries who declined to conform to the changes of the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, and at length died in 1579 A.D. Though dying in the eleventh of Elizabeth, he is habited in alb, dalmatic, and chasuble, with mitre and staff very much in the style of the effigy of Bishop Gooderich.

On the accession of Elizabeth, in order to conciliate the Puritan party, the second Book of Edward VI. was taken as the basis of the new Service Book, some alterations being made in the direction of a return to the observances of the first Book. Among other things, it was ordered that "the minister at the time of the Communion, and at all other times in his ministration, shall use such ornaments in the church as were in use by authority of Parliament in the second year of King Edward VI., according to the Act of Parliament set in the beginning of this book." Of the whole body of the Marian clergy, only 189 abandoned their cures; the rest accepted the new order of things: they had always been accustomed to wear the vestments; then the vestments were in the sacristies of all the churches ready to hand; it is natural to suppose that they would obey the order which directed them to continue to wear them. But the persecutions of Mary's reign had produced in the popular mind an intense hatred of Popery, and of all that savoured of it. The Puritan party, who had procured the rejection of the vestments in the second Book of Edward VI., were now much more influential than they were then; and one of the objects against which they especially inflamed the mind of the people was these ancient

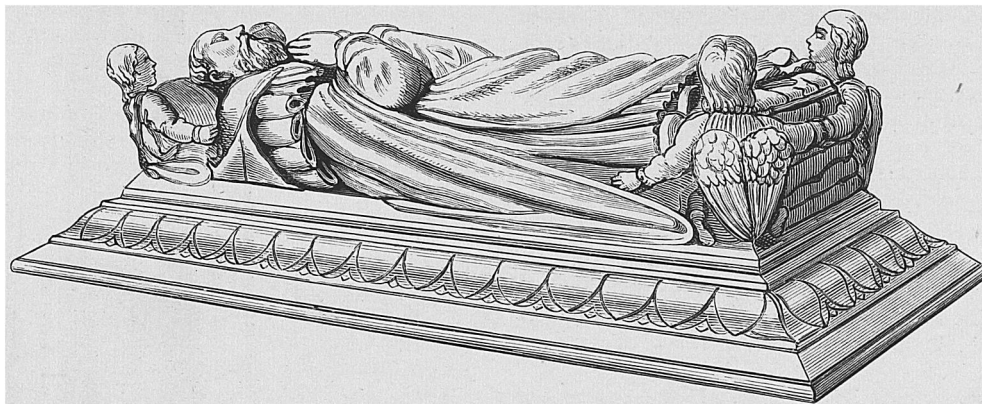


Fig. 1.—Archbishop Sandys. A.D. 1588.

vestments, which they held up to hatred as "rags of Popery." Still, it is to be presumed that the numerous body of the clergy who were attached to the ancient principles of the English Reformation would obey the rubric and continue to wear the vestments which, as we have seen, many of them probably had never laid aside. At the consecration of Archbishop Parker, the officiating bishops wore episcopal vestments, and the epistoller and gospeller wore silk copes.

We give here (Fig. 1) a very interesting illustration of this period, from the tomb of Archbishop Sandys, one of the sufferers in the Marian persecution, who was consecrated bishop at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. He died Archbishop of York, July, 1588 A.D., and lies buried under a noble altar-tomb, in Southwell Minster, Notts. The chasuble is clearly shown, and there is this to be noted in its shape: it is full at the sides and in

front it falls unusually low, for even as it is represented gathered up on the arms, it reaches as far as to the instep, while behind it is formed into a train so long that it is brought down to the heels and folded back under the body, reaching up to the middle. Over the shoulders is what we take to be a doctor's hood, forming a kind of short full cape over the shoulders, with the cowl hanging behind. Comparing the chasuble of Gooderich with that of Sandys, it would seem that its shape had been modified, departing from the stiff, scanty ante-Reformation shape, and approaching more nearly to the ample scope and flowing folds of the earlier centuries. Not that every late chasuble had a train; this is clearly the state-robe of an archbishop, appropriately used on his monumental effigy; the present Archbishop of Canterbury, at his enthronization, wore a train carried by pages, as probably his predecessors have done.

In 1564-5 the Queen wrote a formal letter addressed to the Archbishop, complaining that he and his suffragans had allowed to creep into the Church "an open and manifest disorder and offence to the godly-wise and obedient persons, by diversity of opinions, and especially in the external, decent; and lawful rites

* Continued from page 53.

† Engraved in Dugdale's "Warwickshire," vol. ii., p. 917.

‡ The royal letter prefixed to the canons of 1640, hereafter quoted, asserts that this was the case.

and ceremonies to be used in the churches." Whereupon some Advertisements were drawn up (apparently they rested on the authority of the bishops, and did not receive any formal royal sanction), in which a minimum of ritual was ordered; and the bishops tried to enforce it on the Puritan clergy.

We may pass over the Injunctions (A.D. 1559) of Queen Elizabeth, as being superseded by later legislation, and go at once to the Canons of A.D. 1603-4, and those of 1640, which (speaking generally) are still law. The Royal Letters Patent prefixed to the latter canons say: "We are given to understand that many of our subjects, being misled against the rites and ceremonies now used in the Church of England, have lately taken offence at the same, upon an unjust supposal that they are not only contrary to our laws, but also introductive into Popish superstitions; whereas it well appeareth unto us, upon mature consideration, that the said rites and ceremonies which are now so much quarrelled at were not only approved of and used by those learned and godly divines to whom, at the time of Reformation, under King Edward VI., the compiling of the Book of Common Prayer was committed (divers of whom suffered martyrdom in Queen Mary's days), but also again taken up by this whole Church under Elizabeth, and so duly and ordinarily practised for a great part of her reign (within the memory of divers living)." Of the canons of 1603-4, the 24th orders that in all cathedral and collegiate churches, at the celebration of Holy Communion, "the principal minister use a decent cope, and be assisted with the epistoller and gospeller agreeably, according to the advertisements published anno seventh Elizabeth." The Advertisements referred to ordered that "in the administration of the Holy Eucharist the chief person that officiates in cathedral and collegiate churches shall wear a cope, and that those who read the gospel and the epistle shall appear in the same habit." This canon has been declared by the last of a series of conflicting decisions of the Committee of Council to be the law now obligatory on the subject of vestments. But it is still very generally held that an earlier decision of the Privy Council is better law, and is certain to be re-affirmed on the next occasion, which says that the canon has been superseded on this point by the later legislation, which we go on to mention.

At the restoration of the monarchy and Church in 1661, the Prayer Book received its latest revision; the ornaments rubric was retained (with some verbal alteration, which suffices to prove that it was not retained through inadvertence), and this was done under the authority of the Convocations of the two provinces, and was legalised by the Act of Uniformity under which we now live. So it would seem that this latest authority should override the earlier authority of the canons. This ornaments rubric repeats the rule of ritual which has been maintained ever since the time of Elizabeth, legalising the ornaments of the second year of Edward VI.

The case, therefore, stands briefly thus. If the canons are the authority, the cope ought to be used in cathedrals at the celebration of Holy Communion. If the rubric is the authority, the vestment, or cope, and the alb, ought to be used in all churches at the Holy Communion. In fact, the chasuble (vestment) has been disused since the reign of Elizabeth, until it was revived among us a very few years ago.

We have thus traced the history of the chasuble and alb, the "vestment and white alb plain," which, according to the ornaments rubric is to be worn by the minister at Holy Communion. It remains to say a few words about the tunicles, which are ordered to be worn by those of the clergy who help him in his ministration.

The dalmatic was an outer garment introduced from Dalmatia about the third century, in shape like a short wide tunic, with short wide sleeves, worn over the ordinary tunic. Originally a part of ordinary civil dress, it came to be considered as a clerical vestment. It seems to have been first appropriated to the use of the deacons in the Church of Rome, and to have gradually spread from them until, by the early part of the eighth century, it was everywhere recognised as the distinguishing vestment of the deacon. The tunicle was only another form of the dalmatic, perhaps not so highly ornamented, appropriated to the sub-

deacon. In our old English inventories, &c., the two words seem to be often used indifferently. The shape of the lower part of the dalmatic is clearly seen in several of the illustrations already given in the previous articles.

In the illumination of St. Dunstan, already described from Claudius A iii., there is a smaller figure of an archbishop introduced at his feet, in which the form of the sleeves of the dalmatic is very clearly shown. In the brass of Bishop Goode-rich all the vestments are shown: first the alb, over that the tunicle, with the ends of the stole, then the dalmatic, cut a little shorter in order to show the tunicle under it, and then the chasuble over all. Other illustrations of it may be seen of the end of the thirteenth century, in Royal 2 B vii., at pp. 307, 308, ver.

We turn next to the canons of 1603-4, and to the cope and surplice which are there ordered as the clerical vestments.

The cope seems originally to have been a cloak with a hood, worn for protection out of doors; and it was not until the ninth century that we find it used by the clergy as a vestment; it was therefore of later introduction than any of the previous vestments. When used by the clergy it was regarded especially as a processional vestment, and was worn over the alb and stole; but it came in time to be used in the choir-services, on occasions of high ceremonial. In early examples it is simply a cloak fastened at the breast by a brooch, called in old English a morse, which was often large, and ornamented with enamels and jewels. An example of a Saxon bishop in cope from a MS. pontifical in the Rouen library, will be found engraved in the "Church of our Fathers," vol. ii., p. 24. In the fourteenth and fifteenth cen-

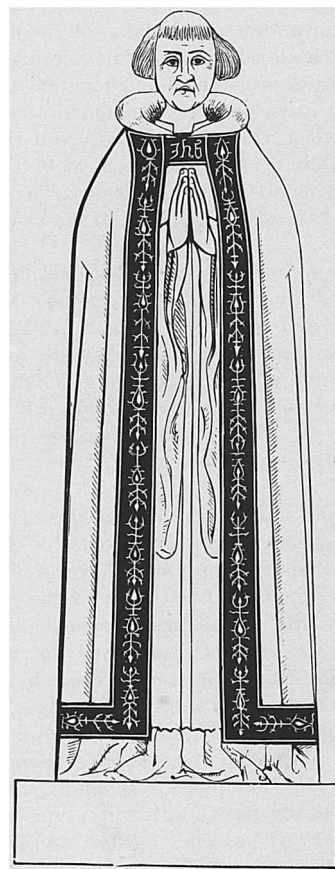


Fig. 2.—Priest in Cope. C. 1400 A.D.

tures the cope was often ornamented with a broad border of very rich embroidery, which fell in two lines down the front of the figure. We give an example of it from a brass at Hitchin, Herts, date C. 1400 A.D.

After the Reformation the cope continued to be worn, and indeed has never gone entirely out of use to this day. Taking the year 1534 as the date of the Reformation, the following are among the remaining post-reformation examples of the cope: the

brass of Thomas Dallynson, A.D. 1541, at Clothall, Herts; the brass of Thomas Capp, A.D. 1545, at St. Stephen's, Southgate, Norwich; the brass of John White, A.D. 1548, then Warden of Winchester College, afterwards Bishop, at Winchester College, Hants; the brass of Thomas Magnus, A.D. 1550, at Sessay, Yorks; a brass at Christ Church Cathedral, date A.D. 1557; and another at Magdalen College, Oxford, date A.D. 1558. To these must be added the monumental effigies of Bishop Heton of Ely (died 1609), who wears an alb and cope of the ancient type, with a border of rows of saints under tabernacle-work; of Archbishop Grindal,* who died A.D. 1583; of Archbishop Harsnett, of York, A.D. 1671, at Chigwell, Essex (engraved in Waller's "Brasses");† and of Bishop Creighton, at Wells, A.D. 1672.

We have seen that in the Elizabethan effigy of Archbishop Sandys the shape of the chasuble had been modified and brought nearer to the ample and dignified shape of the earlier ages; so here the cope has been simplified, and made more after the fashion of the earlier examples. He wears the rochet, or episcopal form of surplice, and over that the gown which is called a chimere, and over that a cope of patterned material, but limp, which the artist has gathered in folds under the right arm; the bishop wears also his mitre, and bears his pastoral staff.

A drawing of the Funeral Procession of Queen Elizabeth published in the "Vetusta Monumenta," gives us a representation of the gentlemen of the Queen's chapel, who are dressed in a long cassock reaching to the ankle, a surplice reaching half-way below the knee, and a cope of rather stiff, ungraceful shape; the costume is finished with a ruff round the neck, and the round hat worn by all gentlemen at that time. Again, in Ashmole's "Order of the Garter," we have an etching, by Hollar, of the procession of the sovereign and knights of the order at the feast of St. George, which affords a view of the clerical costume of the twenty-third year of Charles II. The choristers wear rather short full surplices, over cassocks which reach down to the ground. The vicars of Windsor, the minor canons, and the gentlemen of the chapel at Whitehall wear a long cassock, a surplice, and a cope; the "falling band" which they wear at the neck is the prototype of the "bands" which some of the clergy retain to the present day.

The cope continued to be worn at Durham later than at any other of the cathedrals, viz. till the eighteenth century. The ancient copes are still preserved there. At Westminster also a set of copes is still preserved, and they are used at the coronation of the Sovereign. Our readers will call to mind Archbishop Howley and the other two bishops, all in copes, in the well-known picture of the Coronation of her present Gracious Majesty, whom may God preserve.

The surplice is the most modern of all the clerical vestments. It seems to have been introduced about the eleventh century, and is first mentioned by name in the laws of Edward the Confessor. It was merely a modified form of the alb, being made wider in the sleeve and more ample in the body, that it might more easily and gracefully be worn over the furred gowns or cassocks, which it seems the clergy then began to wear in church for the sake of warmth. There were as many modifications in the fashion of it in the Middle Ages as there are now. Sometimes it falls low round the shoulder, sometimes it comes close up to the neck, sometimes it reaches only a little below the knee, sometimes touches the ground; sometimes the sleeves are short and scanty, sometimes long and ample. It was often worn under the cope, and sufficient indications to show its form will be seen in some of the illustrations already given. We may conclude the series of illustrations with a curious representation from the monumental brass of a rector of Westerham in Kent, who died in 1567, who is habited in a long cassock, a short

surplice, and a scarf,* which seems to be the form given at that time to the ancient stole. Much more of antiquarian interest might be written about all these ancient vestments of the clergy; but enough, we hope, has been said to enable the general reader to understand the vestment-question, which stands for judgment before the first day of next July.

We shall not be departing from the rôle we have undertaken, of giving an impartial historical outline of the facts of the

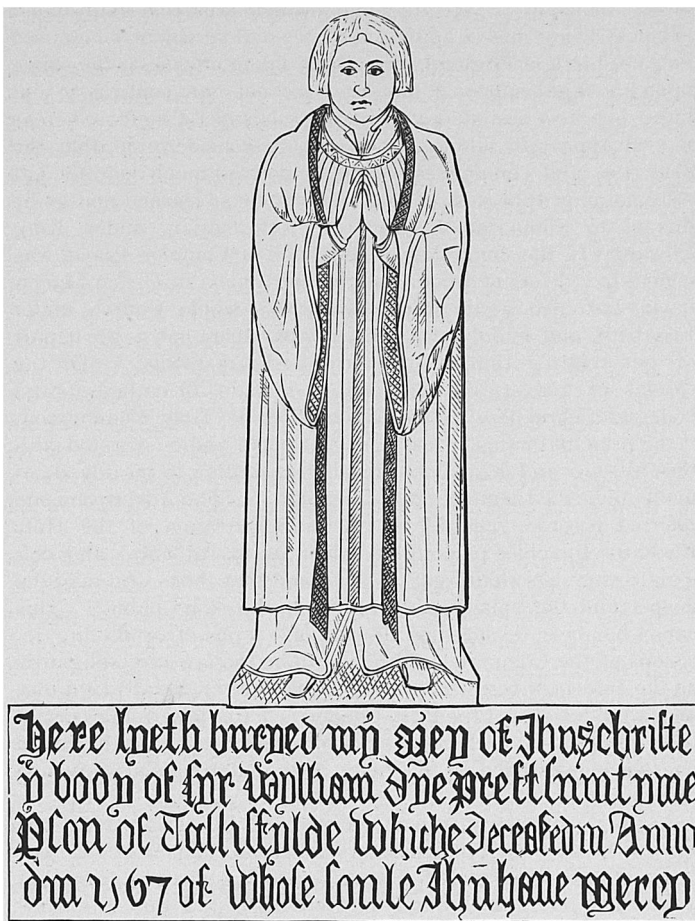


Fig. 3.—Brass, Westerham, Kent. A.D. 1567.

case, that our readers may be helped to form for themselves an opinion upon it, if we point out, in conclusion, what is the question upon which they are asked to form an opinion, and what it is not.

It is not whether we shall introduce popish vestments into the Church of England. It is clear, beyond all possibility of dispute, that these clerical vestments, the alb and the chasuble, were in use in the whole Church for centuries before the usurpations and corruptions of popery began.

It is not whether we shall depart from the principles of the English Reformation. The principles of the Reformation were to throw off all popish usurpations and mediæval corruptions, and to return to the standards of doctrine, of discipline, and of ceremonial of the first ages of the Church. The Reformers went back to the great General Councils of the Church as the interpreters of the doctrines of the Bible; if we go back to the same age for our models of clerical costume, we shall find this close surplice called the alb, and this over-vestment called the *planeta* or chasuble, in universal use.

It is not whether we shall introduce vestments which symbolise a peculiar phase of doctrine in the Holy Communion. The vestments in question had been in universal use for at least half a dozen centuries before Transubstantiation, with the corruptions

* Grindal, at the time of his consecration, had scruples about the vestments, but was advised by Peter Martyr not to refuse a bishopric on their account.

† The monumental brasses of Bishop Guest, A.D. 1587, in Salisbury Cathedral, and Bishop Robinson, A.D. 1616, in Carlisle Cathedral, represent them in the modern episcopal costume; the latter holds a pastoral staff.

* Thomas Leman, A.D. 1534, at Castle Acre, engraved by Cotman, is habited in a surplice. Leonard Hurst, A.D. 1560, at Denham, Bucks, is in a cassock, with a short scarf round his neck, engraved by Haines. John Burton, A.D. 1608, at Burgh, Norfolk, is in a Master of Arts gown.

which flowed from it, had ever been heard of. The attempt to give this party meaning to these vestments was not heard of till a dozen years ago, and has no more reality in it than the party meaning which a dozen years before that was given to the surplice *versus* the black gown. If any prejudice could fairly attach to a vestment on such grounds as these, that prejudice would attach to the surplice, whose introduction curiously enough, is exactly coeval with the introduction of the papal supremacy and the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

The question is partly doctrinal, partly æsthetic, partly sentimental.

1. Doctrinal. For the officiating minister to wear a special vestment for the Holy Communion different from that which he uses at daily prayer, undoubtedly symbolises that we regard the one as a more solemn service than the other. The Church has always so regarded it. "The breaking of the bread" and "the prayers" were separate services from the very first day of the existence of the Church of Christ.* The immemorial usage of the Church puts the clergy, together with the laymen, in the choir, to say the daily prayers, all in the decent white garment in which it clothes all who take any special part in divine service; a deacon may be the highest official present to be the mouth-piece of the congregation. But the celebration of the Holy Communion has always been reserved to the second order of the clergy; and it has always been regarded as a more solemn service than the other. Churchmen of all schools will agree on this point; and the use of a special vestment for the clergyman of the second order celebrating this most solemn service of the Church means no more than this.

2. Æsthetic. We have allowed the revived taste of this generation to have its way in the architecture of the church, in the painting of windows and walls, in the sculpture of pulpits and reredoses, in the metal-work of coronæ and lectern and chalice and paten, in hangings and altar-coverings, in the music of the service; and the only thing which it has not touched is the vestments of the clergy. We have put our choirs into surplices; and good taste asks lastly to put the clergy, in the highest of their ministrations, into something to distinguish them from the choirmen; and that the "something" shall be in æsthetic proportion with the architecture, and sculpture, and painting, and metal-work, and music. People find, on consulting their Prayer Books, that there stands an order at the

beginning of Morning Prayer that the ornaments of the church and of the clergy, at all times of their ministration, shall continue as they were by authority of Parliament in the second year of Edward VI. The lawyers tell us that this is law, and that the next legal decision is certain to declare it to be so. Shall we wait for that decision, and act upon it if it should so turn out; or shall we, by new legislation, anticipate that decision, and establish a new rule of ritual?

3. Then comes the sentimental view of the question. It is urged—That these are the ancient vestments of the clergy, used universally in the Church of Christ for at least fourteen centuries. Used not in the Roman communion only, but in the Eastern churches, which have always opposed the Roman pretensions; and in Lutheran churches of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, which threw off the Roman yoke at the same time as ourselves.—That the English Reformers, in throwing off Roman corruptions, were anxiously careful to maintain and assert the continuity of the Reformed Church with the ancient historical Church of Christ in these realms, and its uninterrupted unity with the Church catholic.—That the "vestment and the white alb plain" are the clerical habits of the Church of the great days of the undivided Church—the days of Athanasius and Chrysostom and Augustine: and that they are the vestments of the pure Saxon Church of this country of the days of Bede, and Alfred the Great, and Alcuin, and Ælfric.—That these ancient vestments are part of the heritage, and symbolise the historical *status* of the Reformed Church of England.—That the Church of England has carefully maintained them as her law, though, in the face of sectarian prejudice and popular misunderstanding, she has winked at the neglect of the law for the sake of peace.—That this English communion seems intended by God's providence, by its Catholicity on one hand, and its Protestantism on the other, to be a centre round which the divided Churches may rally.—And that now, when we are effecting a remodelling of our Church, which is to last probably for the next three hundred years, it would be a great misfortune to recede from that standard of primitive doctrine and discipline to which the divided Churches are converging. It is true that this would be a recession only in non-essentials, only in outward garb; but non-essentials have their importance, and it is not unimportant to exhibit to the eyes of the Churches the outward garb of that primitive catholicity, which, by God's great goodness, we have retained.

H.M.S. "GALATEA" ON A CRUISE.

O. W. BRIERLY, Painter.

A. WILLMORE, Engraver.

THE works of Mr. Brierly have long placed him in the foremost rank of our water-colour painters in the representation of marine subjects, for it is to such that he almost, if not entirely, limits his practice, as evidenced chiefly in the gallery of the Water Colour Society, of which institution he is an Associate Member. When the Duke of Edinburgh sailed in 1867-8, on his first cruise round the world in the *Galatea*, his Royal Highness was accompanied by Mr. Brierly, whose pencil was engaged frequently in depicting the various marine incidents of the voyage. The picture from which the accompanying engraving was executed represents the vessel, a splendid frigate, on her passage from the Cape of Good Hope to Australia, in October, 1867; she experienced some very heavy weather, particularly when nearing the Island of St. Paul's, where the ship was caught in a cyclone, in which she was nearly laid upon her beam-ends, and narrowly escaped the loss of her masts. It seems to be the advent of this incident which suggested to the artist the subject of his picture, for there are in it indications of a storm, and the crew of the *Galatea* are preparing for it by shortening sail.

The picture was painted for the Duke of Edinburgh from a sketch exhibited in 1872-3 at the gallery of the Society of Water

Colour Painters. With reference to the sketch, we need only repeat our own remarks after examining it in the gallery:—"In the drawing No. 54, by O. W. Brierly, there is an indescribable poetic grandeur. It represents an English frigate sailing by moonlight under a goodly spread of canvas. We may accept the brave ship as the *Galatea*, and Mr. Brierly has done full honour to her, for there never has been exhibited a more perfect marine-picture of its kind." When we say that the finished work has in it all the excellences of the sketch carried out with more refinement of manipulation, no further commendation of this beautiful picture is necessary.

Mr. Brierly, within the last three or four years, has painted and exhibited some capital historical marine-pictures; such, for example, as 'Blake going on board the *Resolution* off Dover, to take command of the Fleet fitted out against the Dutch, in June, 1652;' 'Magellan discovering the Straits between Patagonia and Terra del Fuego, afterwards called the Straits of Magellan, 1520;' 'Blake, with a Squadron of five Ships, waiting to attack the Royalist Fleet, anchored in the Tagus, under the command of Prince Rupert, 1651;' and 'Drake taking the Spanish Galleon *Capitana*, one of the Armada, to Torbay, on the morning of July 22, 1588;' with others.

* See Acts ii. 42.